

Mentored Fundraising Assignment 19 Homework Instructions

6-Month Mentored Nonprofit Fundraising Certificate Program

Center for Sustainable Development. <https://nonprofit.csd-i.org/nonprofit-fundraising-training-certificate/>

This week's resources:

Class Home Page for Mentored Fundraising

Fundraising Assignment 19 Homework Instructions

[Download Magee Example of the Food Bank Newsletter Template—Word document](#)

Assignment 19: Write a new, compelling newsletter as part of your first campaign.

Write your new newsletter to be based upon the landing page from Assignment 18. Create a master newsletter template for replicable efficiency.

Newsletter Template from your provider.

I will typically write a brand new newsletter template in Microsoft Word. Even if I'm simply copying and pasting from a landing page, I'll still assemble my newsletter template in Word. It's much easier to read and check spelling than in an email newsletter program.

Most email newsletter programs like MailChimp and Constant Contact have different themes for email newsletters. They typically will have just a blank page that you type into or paste into but they will also have a collection of attractive themes from which you can choose one for your organization.

In assignments 17 and 18 you saw a number of different example newsletters—some of which were extremely simple and had no graphic elements at all, and others which had an attractive banner or color scheme.

So your first decision to make is if you want to go with a graphic template. If so, choose one that's the most pleasant to you and that your readers will enjoy.

The next thing is that email newsletter services will allow you to edit just like in a word document, but they will also allow you to switch to HTML mode if you want to do some fine tuning.

Once you've chosen a look and feel that you want to stay with, and have assembled your first newsletter, you can simply copy it for your next newsletter. This keeps the look and feel of your master template consistent from newsletter to newsletter. Then it is just a matter of doing some copying and pasting. I typically copy and paste one paragraph at a time—that way I don't lose the formatted look of the newsletter.

Another nice thing about copying last week's newsletter for this week's newsletter is that some elements will remain the same from week to week. You might have a donate button or a 'Contact Us' link which will stay the same from week to week so this will be more efficient than starting from scratch each time.

The Newsletter Itself

We use Constant Contact for sending emails and for maintaining our email lists. I will be using Constant Contact for assembling this newsletter because we have the best selection of our own newsletter templates on file there.

Since this is going to be my first improved newsletter, I'm going to print out both the word landing page and the word newsletter so I can set them down side-by-side and begin developing a newsletter template that will allow me to simply copy from the landing page and paste into the newsletter. I want to be able to do this each week to save myself time and work.

I like working in Microsoft Word. It allows me to quickly copy and paste—and to reformat and rearrange a page until I like the way that it looks. Once I'm happy I like to read through it very carefully and edit it until I feel that it expresses what I want it to say.

So for this assignment I copied directly from the A13 landing page onto a blank word document to create a new newsletter template. The landing page is quite long so I only copied a few of the things that I felt were the most important for someone to read in a newsletter.

After I was done, the newsletter was too long. It was about 450 words. So I carefully went through the newsletter and removed things that weren't absolutely essential and got the newsletter down to 250 words. I like my newsletters to be between 150 and 250 words.

I also made sure that there were direct links to the landing page from the newsletter [That's the goal! You don't want people to just read your newsletter—you want people to go to your landing page where they can subscribe, donate, volunteer.]. I also made sure that there were some call-to-action buttons that say "subscribe, donate and volunteer."

Here's what the new newsletter template looks like. Download it and use it for your own template if you like. You can also download the Word version of the landing page and compare them side by side and see that the newsletter is a direct copy/paste from the landing page. This process really speeds up newsletter production. You can also use the same technique of copying and pasting from your landing page into your social media posts.

Newsletter Template:

From: Tim Magee: Claremont Food Bank News
Subject: Learn 3 Ways You Can End Hunger in Claremont Today
Preheader: Join a new community of doers, make new friends, support families who are hungry and learn how important our food bank is.

Dear Tim,

Learn how to end hunger in Claremont.

Join a new community of doers, make new friends—and support families in Claremont who are hungry.



End hunger in Claremont.

Help members of your community by supporting our food bank:

- Feed the hungry in Claremont
- 200 families a month visit our food bank.
- 52 families have plots in our community garden.
- Volunteer with new friends.
- Donate your extra food to the Claremont Food Bank.

[Learn more about how to support the Claremont Food Bank:](#)

Make a gift today, support local families and end hunger in Claremont.

GIVE NOW ▶



Great People + New Donations = More Families Served

Work together with like-minded people to break the cycle of hunger in Claremont:

- Enjoy the camaraderie of volunteering.
- Develop new friendships in the community.
- Do something meaningful for Claremont with your extra time.
- Enjoy reading our monthly newsletter about your new friends

[Learn more about volunteering for our important programs.](#)

Choose the program that's best for you!

VOLUNTEER ▶

Subscribe: Learn about the families and how to volunteer or donate extra food.

Our people-centered newsletter always includes heartwarming stories about the families that visit our food bank.

Your subscription will keep you up to date on our:

- flexible hours
- multiple locations
- our wonderful staff and tremendous volunteers
- transportation to get you to the food bank
- weekly fresh vegetables provided by our own community garden

Visit our website to [learn more about ending hunger in Claremont](#)—and how you can participate too. Subscribe to this informative food bank newsletter.

SUBSCRIBE ▶

[Contact me](#) directly with any questions. [Learn more about our food bank, the people and our programs.](#)

Sincerely,

Tim Magee
Executive Director
Claremont Food Bank

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Again, the important things are above the fold. There is both an offer and a call to action at the very top so that if someone opens the email they'll immediately see what's being offered and have a call to action with links that will take them exactly where they want to go.

I also really worked on the subject line and included several of the important things that we learned about on subject lines. I've kept the subject line short, I've included a number at the very beginning and I've told subscribers what they will find if they open the newsletter. Here it is: "Learn 3 Ways You Can End Hunger in Claremont Today" (50 characters with spaces).

Creating the Live Newsletter Template

Because my improved landing page looks good I was simply able to copy and paste sections of HTML into a blank, new webpage to create the newsletter template. I did this carefully so that I didn't alter the format or the look of the newsletter. This is really quite quick.

So now the email newsletter looks exactly like the Word copy of the Newsletter which looks exactly like the components that I copied from the landing page to paste into the newsletter: they all match.

Tech Tip:

I have several newsletter templates at Constant Contact, our newsletter service provider. In that case I can just copy the previous newsletter template and paste in the new content.

But when I'm developing a brand-new template I find it a lot easier to copy the components of the landing page that I have used for the new newsletter and paste them into a blank webpage on our website using HTML. This way I can adjust to clean it up at the webpage level until it looks exactly like the Word version of my new newsletter template.

[You can see the webpage version of the newsletter here.](#)

Then I can go to Constant Contact, open up a blank newsletter, and paste the HTML into there. This way all of the formatting that was visible on the webpage and in the Word document will appear exactly the same in the new newsletter template.

I find that it's a lot easier to adjust the formatting at the webpage level than it is at the newsletter level in Constant Contact.

IMPORTANT: we belong to Network for Good. Through Network for Good we can subscribe to Constant Contact for only \$30 per month. This is the lowest price around for any of the newsletter service providers. In other words, I set this up with Network for Good and we pay them on a monthly basis—we don't pay Constant Contact. Check it out!

Here is what the newsletter looks like in the Constant Contact newsletter platform. I simply copied the website HTML from the Newsletter template above and pasted it into a new Constant Contact newsletter campaign. It looks pretty good but just needs a little cleaning up and it will be ready to send.

Backgrounds

Outer Background Color

Outer Border Color

Inner Background Color

Divider Color

Button Color

Coupon Background Color

Fonts

Heading Text
Century Go... 18pt

Main Text
Calibri 11pt

Borders

Coupon Border Color

Restore Defaults

Spam Check Design Text Style Sheet Preview Save

From: Tim Magee@CSDI<newsletter@csd-i.org>
 Subject: Learn 3 Ways You Can End Hunger in Claremont Today
 Preheader: Join a new community of doers, make new friends, support families who are hungry and learn how important our food bank is.
 Reply: newsletter@csd-i.org

Learn how to end hunger in Claremont.

Dear (Contact First Name)

Join a new community of doers, make new friends-and support families in Claremont who are hungry.



End hunger in Claremont.

Help members of your community by supporting our food bank:

- Feed the hungry in your community:
- 200 families a month visit our food bank.
- 52 families have plots in our community garden.
- Volunteer with new friends.
- Donate your extra food to the Food Bank.

[Learn more about how to support the Claremont Food Bank:](#) Make a gift today, support local families and end hunger in Claremont. **GIVE NOW**

Great People + New Donations = More Families Served

Work together with like-minded people to break the cycle of hunger in Claremont:

- Enjoy the camaraderie of volunteering.
- Develop new friendships in the community.
- Do something meaningful for Claremont with your extra time.
- Enjoy reading our monthly newsletter about your new friends.

[Learn more about volunteering for our important programs.](#) Choose the program that's best for you! **VOLUNTEER**

Subscribe: Learn about the families and how to volunteer or donate extra food.

Our people-centered newsletter always includes heartwarming stories about the families that visit our food bank.

Your subscription will keep you up to date on our:

- flexible hours
- multiple locations
- our wonderful staff and tremendous volunteers
- transportation to get you to the food bank
- weekly fresh vegetables provided by our own community garden

[Visit our website to learn more about ending hunger in Claremont-](#)and how you can participate too. Subscribe to this informative food bank newsletter. **SUBSCRIBE**

[Contact me](#) directly with any questions. [Learn more about our food bank, the people and our programs.](#)

Sincerely,

Tim Magee
 Executive Director
 Claremont Food Bank

Sending the Newsletter

One of the first things that I do before sending a newsletter is mailing list hygiene. Constant Contact allows me to see which email addresses no longer work each time I sent an email out. I usually wait a week after sending out an email newsletter, and then I go and delete emails that say things like "mailbox full" and "undeliverable." This typically means that these people don't work for that organization any longer.

This only takes a minute to do but in the long run can save you hundreds of dollars. You're paying for each and every one of those names and if emails that you're paying for and sending out aren't reaching anybody, you might as well get rid of them. It's also a lot easier to do a few at a time on a monthly basis than to sit down and try to weed through several thousand emails after a year.

The next thing that I do is to make sure all recent subscribers are uploaded into our mailing list service provider's database of our contacts. It's very important to make sure that a new subscriber receives something from you fairly soon after they subscribe—otherwise they forget who you are and the relevance of their subscription.

Fortunately, over the past couple of years we have segmented the names as they come in. This means that we know if somebody is from Africa versus North America (two different markets and two different nonprofit email newsletters), or if they are a donor or a recipient of our services (two slightly different nonprofit email newsletters).

Before we learned the need to do this, all of the names were in one big jumble and so we couldn't target specialized nonprofit email newsletters to the correct people. Start early with learning how to segment! It will save you a tremendous amount of work later on.

Preparation for mailing.

The next thing that I do is that I sleep on the work that I've done on the newsletter—and then the next day I print it out and read through it carefully to make sure that it makes sense and that there aren't typos. It's even better if you can get another member of your team to read through it.

Then I send a copy of the newsletter to myself and I make sure that it looks good in a couple of different browsers and email programs. I then check all of the links to make sure they work.

Once I'm satisfied that my mailing list is in good shape and my newsletter is perfect—I send it!

Here is a good checklist from Blog Tyrant:

This Checklist Ensures You Send Successful Email Newsletters, Every Time

<https://www.blogtyrant.com/this-checklist-ensures-you-send-successful-email-newsletters-every-time/>

The homework to hand in through your email to me:

1. If helpful, download my [Word example Food Bank Newsletter template](#). Edit it to represent your own newsletter so that I can see how it has evolved. You can attach the edited Word document to this week's email to me (be sure and change your page title and filename to reflect your project).

Or: 2. If you already have your own Word document with your own newsletter—that's fine too—just send it along.

That's it! Get going!

See you next week. Assignment Twenty: Connect: Make sure that your newsletter and your perfect landing page templates are dovetailed together for ensuring that there is consistency between what the reader reads in your newsletter and finds on your landing page. Incorporate a call to action. Proof read both the newsletter and the landing page.